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## What is the Veterans Aid and Attendance Pension?

The Veterans Administration offers Aid and Attendance as part of an "Improved Pension" Benefit that is largely unknown. This Improved Pension allows for Veterans and surviving spouses who require the regular attendance of another person to assist in eating, bathing, dressing, taking medications, or other needs of that nature to receive additional monetary benefits. Aid and Attendance can help pay for care in the home, nursing home or assisted living center.

This benefit is often overlooked by families of Veterans or surviving spouses who need additional monies to help care for ailing parents or loved ones. This is a "Pension Benefit" and IS NOT dependent upon service-related injuries for compensation. A Veteran is eligible for up to \$1,644 per month, while a surviving spouse is eligible for up to \$1,056 per month. A couple is eligible for up to \$1,949 per month.

The Improved Pension is not a new benefit, and has in fact been an entitlement for 60 years - sitting idle while millions have, and still are missing out. The VA is not like Medicaid. They do not go back 5 years to see net worth, etc., but decide net worth based on what it is on the day of filing a claim. A note of caution: if you believe you may need to apply for Medicaid in the next 5 years, you may want to talk with an attorney to review your financial plan before you apply for the Pension.

### Eligibility for A & A

Any War-Time Veteran with 90 days of active duty, with at least 1 day beginning or ending during a period of War, is eligible to apply for the Aid & Attendance Improved Pension. A surviving spouse (marriage must

have ended due to death of veteran) of a War-Time Veteran may also apply. The individual applying must qualify both medically and financially.

Please note that house cleaning, preparing meals, and yard work do not count for Aid & Attendance. Your children can also be paid to provide services, but if they live with you, or if you live with them, it can complicate things. A spouse cannot be a paid caregiver.

In summary, Aid & Attendance is designed to help Veterans and/or their surviving spouses receive additional financial support to help with their care in an assisted living, nursing home, or with in-home care. This benefit could mean thousands of dollars of extra care that could ease the financial strain for you and your loved ones.

To learn more about the benefits please contact your County Veteran's Officer in your area. In Grand County, contact Dave Jones at (970) 725-3122 or by email at [djones@co.grand.co.us](mailto:djones@co.grand.co.us). In Summit Count, contact Tom Byledbal. He can be reached at (970) 668-5360 ext 13 or by email at [cvso@co.summit.us](mailto:cvso@co.summit.us).

### Source:

<http://dmva.state.co.us/page/va>,  
[www.thehugheslawfirm.net](http://www.thehugheslawfirm.net),  
[www.veteranaid.org](http://www.veteranaid.org)

Submitted by Jeff Pexton, Cliffview Assisted Living Residence in Kremmling, CO. He can be reached at 970-724-3530 or [Cliffview@seniorhousingoptions.org](http://Cliffview@seniorhousingoptions.org).

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